THE ALTAR

ITS SETTING AND ORNAMENTS

A Paper Compiled from Many Sources

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THE first rubric in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England reads as follows—"*The chancels shall remain as they have done in times past. And here it is to be noted that such ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof at all times of their ministration, shall be retained and be in use as were in this Church of England, by the authority of Parliament, in the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth.*" This rubric was passed both by Convocation and Parliament. Thus there was secured to the Church of England and all her daughter Churches of the Anglican Communion a worthy tradition for the altar, its setting and ornaments, as well as for all other adornments of public worship, according to Catholic practice, at a point in history before the debasements of the rococo period set in, under Roman domination on the Continent after the Council of Trent, and before the spoilation, ruination, destruction and contemptuous neglect of ornaments and ceremonies inflicted on the English Church by Puritan theologians and ecclesiastics, and other statesmen and politicians.

England has a rich heritage in her cathedrals and old parish churches, in spite of the carved work thereof being broken down by axes and hammers during the iconoclastic days of the reformation period and the later devastations of Puritan times. The restorations in the Victorian Era and the introduction of meretricious ornaments copied from 19th century Roman horrors, bought from dealers in stock patterns of ecclesiastical-shop-brass, by over-zealous enthusiasts of the Catholic revival in the Anglican Communion, did not improve matters from an artistic standpoint. These mistakes however are rapidly being rectified today both in old and new churches in England, in this country, and other lands wherever the principles derived from the Ornaments Rubric are known and put into practice.

After our colonial period had passed, the Church in this land suffered long at the hands of building committees and architects ignorant of the requirements for churchly structures and ornaments, and especially of the principles which guided the builders of the "times past," referred to in the Ornaments Rubric. Although architects and other artists should not be hampered in their creative work, even today when things are so greatly improved, there are certain details about which many church architects need to be told, in order to have

our chancels, altars, and other ornaments in agreement with the old and best models. At least we must save our churches from altars perched on too many steps, oversize reredoses which dwarf the altar, and general arrangements adapted from 19th century Roman models.

It is interesting to note here that the present liturgical movement in the Roman Church under the influence of their best scholars and artists, is going back to the older ways common all over Europe, at the period referred to by the Ornaments Rubric, and they are making their altars without so-called re-tables, gradines and other excrescences which mar the proportions and appearance of the holy table. Rarely today in new Roman churches designed by really good architects are altars to be seen resembling the glorified marble soda fountains of the gay nineties, or gothic wedding cakes, hung with lace and crowded with candles. Likewise they are forsaking their skimped surplices, and chasubles of the sandwich-man type, and restoring longer and fuller surplices and chasubles of the so-called gothic shape and of ampler dimensions.

Many of us have had and perhaps still have a legacy of monstrosities in the architecture and ornaments of our churches, and may still be suffering from these, and too much brass, ugly carpets, bad stained glass, dull-colored walls of terra cotta, dark

and muddy greens, reds, browns or dirty buff, with stenciled patterns, painted texts and the like for decoration. It is hoped that this paper may be of help to some who have such problems to meet when the time comes for alterations and improvements.

Just a word more about the Ornaments Rubric. It may be objected, that since it was not included in the American Prayer Book, we are therefore free to build and furnish our churches in any way we like. Would that we had retained it, for even if we had departed from its requirements as was done in England for many years in some respects, nevertheless it would be there in the Prayer Book as an official standard to be followed in the better days that are coming. However, even if we are not officially bound by it, we show common sense in conforming to it, and thereby also help in furthering the needful work of making our churches all over the Anglican Communion, recognizable as Anglican, and not weak copies of Roman churches. However much the Roman Church may improve in its architecture and ornaments, its very rigid rules about tabernacles and thrones, canopies, etc., for Benediction and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and for its other distinctive arrangements, will produce altars and chancels of quite a different type from what Anglican altars and chancels should be.

The typical English east-end or chancel is square, and this is the most satisfactory arrangement for our churches. However the Ornaments Rubric designates no special type of architecture and there are churches in England, of Saxon and Norman architecture as well as of the Gothic of the Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular types. There is no reason why Romanesque, Spanish, French, Classical and Basilican, and even churches in modern styles should not be built there and here, with due thought as to surroundings, climate and other considerations. But whatever the style or type of architecture the best results will be produced by following the general principles derivable from the Ornaments Rubric.

The main subject of this paper is the altar, its setting and its ornaments, therefore only a few words will be devoted to that part of the Chancel outside of the sanctuary, sometimes called the Choir.

The placing of a choir or rood-screen between the nave and the chancel or choir, was an almost universal custom in England, and may still be seen in the older and larger churches on the continent. On this screen the great rood or crucifix was placed with the attendant figures of the Blessed Virgin and St. John.

The East has had its great screen or iconostasis for centuries, dividing the holy place from the rest of the church. The West developed its rood-screens, until the introduction of the Elevation of the Host at Mass changed the emphasis of the Mass from the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice to the Adoration of the Host, then the screens began to disappear. Rarely if ever is a rood-screen seen in a modern Roman church. Here extremes meet. The Roman Church wishes all obstruction removed between the congregation and the altar, so that the Host may be seen at the Elevation in the Mass, and at Benediction and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, and the Protestant Churches likewise want nothing to obscure the sight of the preacher. The Eastern tradition with its iconostasis and the Anglican tradition with its rood-screen, are the more primitive and beautiful, and symbolize that the service of the altar is The Holy Mystery. Rood-screens also symbolize the veil within which Christ entered at His Ascension, the Choir symbolizing the outer courts of heaven, and the Sanctuary the Heaven of Heavens where the worship of earth is lifted up into the heavenly places and unites with Christ in offering and pleading His completed sacrifice which He continually presents in Heaven. It is also altogether fitting that communicants going to the altar to receive the heavenly food, should

pass under the rood, the sign of their redemption through Christ.

Within the rood-screen there are sometimes stalls for the clergy only in small chancels, but in large chancels usually there are choir stalls as well. It is too bad to spoil a small chancel by crowding into it stalls and benches for the choir. A space of at least 10 feet is needed in the center between the front desks of the choir stalls in the narrowest chancel. This may mean having only one row of stalls on either side, and if there is not room for one row, and 10 feet between their desks, it would be better to omit stalls on the sides of the chancel altogether, and make provision for singers elsewhere. In any case whether there are choir stalls or not in the chancel the clergy stalls are better placed against the choir or rood-screen, so that for prayers and praises, the ministers face the altar as the people do, and as the leaders of the congregation in the choir offices. For the exhortations, biddings and other words spoken to the people, it is only necessary for the minister to turn himself about and face the congregation.

In small churches the chancel, or at least the choir portion of it, need not be raised above the level of the nave and certainly not more than one step, and only two or three steps in large churches.

In some old churches in England there is a step *down* into the chancel.

It is likely that in most churches one step will be placed at the entrance to the sanctuary, though there need not be, if communion benches are provided with a base of the convenient height and depth for kneeling upon. Where there are only altar rails and no kneeling step, a strip of kneeling cushion upholstered to 5 or 6 inches thick and 8 or 10 inches wide would suffice. The kneeling place for communicants should never be lower than the floor of the sanctuary and is better a few inches higher. Movable communion benches are a great convenience. Every step added takes from the height of the chancel and also from the floor space. In small and in low-roofed churches and chancels this is a very important consideration.

The space from the sanctuary step to the first step to the altar, commonly called the pavement, should be at least 6 feet. Rarely if ever should the altar be mounted on more than three steps, the lowest for the sub-deacon or Epistoler, the second for the deacon or Gospeller, and the top step or foot-pace for the Celebrant. If it is necessary to save space the sub-deacon may stand and kneel on the pavement and only two steps be used, and in smaller churches to have only the foot-pace, one step up for the Celebrant, and in very small sanctuaries it

is better for the altar to stand on the floor or pavement without any step. As stated above, 6 feet at least if possible should be left from the communion step to the step to the altar. The remaining space may then be used for additional, one, or two, steps according to circumstances. If there are deacon and sub-deacon steps, they should not be higher than 5 inches and have a depth of at least 18 inches, but 22 or 24 inches would be better. The foot-pace should have a depth of 30 inches. It is well for the one or two lower steps to the altar to extend across the whole width of the sanctuary, and where there is only a foot-pace, if the sanctuary is narrow, it would be well to extend that across the whole space.

The altar itself should be 3 feet 3 inches high, and not less than 2 feet 10 inches deep, 3 feet being better for average sized churches. The length of the altar will depend on the dimensions and character of the sanctuary. Most altars are made too short today for the requirements of Gothic architecture. A proportion of 5 to 12 is good, which would give an altar 10 feet long in a sanctuary 24 feet wide. No altar should be less than 6 feet long.

It is possible to add to the length and height of an altar which is too short and not quite high enough, by having a movable top made of oak or other wood, 2 or 3 inches thick and extending a foot or so, beyond the ends of the altar, and pro-

jecting an inch or two in front, if the top of the altar does not already project enough. The top of the altar should always project two or three inches in front else the priest will be continually hitting his toes against the base when celebrating. The altar hangings of course should be extended to the dimensions of the lengthened top.

Both wood and stone altars should be simple in design and not carved or decorated beyond the simplest mouldings, and certainly never colored or gilt, because by Anglican tradition they are stripped bare after Evensong of Maundy Thursday and remain so through Good Friday and Easter Even until Evensong. For this reason dark-colored wood, or stone not lighter in color than gray, are the best materials.

It is well for altars to stand clear of the chancel wall, reredos or dorsal, in order to get behind them, and if there is room it is also convenient to have a clear passage behind the reredos or dorsal of the main altar.

Gradines or so-called re-tables were never seen on altars, on the continent or in England, until modern times. They are fatal to the dignity of the altar and ruin the proportions of it and of the dorsal or reredos behind it. Along with tabernacles they are a modern invention, unfortunately copied in England and here, from Roman churches

of late date. Our Roman brethren are dispensing with gradines now, and in some of their churches a hanging pyx for the reserved sacrament may be found instead of a tabernacle.

In England as long as the Blessed Sacrament was reserved it was in a hanging pyx over the altar, as was also common on the continent, or in an aumbry in the north wall of the sanctuary, or in a sacrament house, a structure near the altar. The English Prayer Book as proposed in 1928 specifies an aumbry for reservation. A tabernacle spoils the proportions of an altar and ruins a reredos architecturally, as also does a block of stone or wood in the center on which to place the altar cross.

The Ornaments Rubric covers, and the English canons order, a carpet of silk or other stuff to cover the whole front of the altar. This custom goes back to the first Christian century and always prevailed in England as well as in continental Europe. The one exception to this rule as already stated, being the stripped altar at the end of Holy Week. This covering is called the frontal. There may also be a narrow overhanging strip of the same or different material and color, at the top, called the frontlet and often erroneously named the super-frontal which is really the old name for the dorsal or upper-frontal. The frontlet is often made too deep. 7½ inches including the fringe is a

maximum measurement, and often 6 inches or even 5 inches would be better.

Beautiful frontals may be made of tapestry, brocade, and other materials of bold design, in panels with narrow strips of plain harmonizing or contrasting color between, and for the frontlet. These are far more effective and usually in better taste than embroidered frontals and frontlets on which alphas and omegas, crowns and crosses, conventional lilies and roses have been much overdone.

If frontals and frontlets for all the seasons cannot be afforded, two sets will suffice, one for ordinary use and one for festivals, and even one frontlet can be planned to go with two frontals. A special set for Lent, of linen, which will be described later may be quite inexpensive and most effective.

In recent years sad to say, some of our churches have resorted to bare altars in front, or having only the frontlet, or even worse a strip of lace along the front edge of the altar, in imitation of some Roman churches which are disobeying their own rules, which require a frontal and frontlet. For the top of the altar three linen cloths is the traditional use. A cere cloth is only necessary on stone altars. It is a cloth which has been waxed and keeps dampness from the upper cloths. The first cloth may be the coarse linen to which the frontlet is attached, and needs to be fastened at the back of the altar

by rings which slip onto hooks on the back, if the altar is of wood, and stands free from the wall or reredos behind it. Otherwise a flat bar of metal can be run into a proper hem on the back edge of the cloth. Its weight should be sufficient to hold the first cloth and its attached frontlet on the top of the altar without slipping.

The second cloth is just the size of the top of the altar, and the third is the "fair linen" of the rubric, and should hang over the ends of the altar to reach within an inch or two of the floor. It should not hang over the front at all. It may be decorated with five embroidered crosses symbolizing the five wounds of the Crucified, or it may be plain. The ends may be fringed but are better plain, and certainly never trimmed with lace.

Other linen ornaments are: (1). The Corporals, a pair of cloths not less than 20 inches square, including an inch hem, (unless the space from the base of the altar cross to the front edge of the top of the altar is less than 20 inches.) One, the First Corporal, is for spreading on the altar at the Offertory, on which to set the sacred vessels containing the bread and wine. It may have a cross embroidered in outline perfectly flat in the center. It should be folded inward in threes, so as to make nine squares with its folding lines when spread on the altar. The second Corporal, sometimes called

"the Pall" is the "fair linen cloth" required by the rubric, for covering "what remaineth of the consecrated elements," after the Communion of the people. It should be folded wrong side in, in threes so as to make nine squares, and to distinguish it from the first Corporal, may have a cross of different design placed not in true center, but in the center of the middle front square near the hem. When folded this cross and square should be on the outside. The Second Corporal stiffened with a little starch and folded, makes the cover for the chalice until the Communion, and a better cover than the modern "Pall" of the Roman use, (which unfortunately has been copied in many of our churches,) a square of cardboard, metal or glass covered with linen and edged with lace. After the Communion it is unfolded and covers the sacred vessels containing the Blessed Sacrament. The silk "chalice veil" (so-called) another modern Roman invention has no place among our ornaments. Our Prayer Book is quite in line with ancient usage in only ordering the sacred vessels to be veiled or covered when the Blessed Sacrament is within them.

(2). The Purificator, a napkin of soft linen or birdseye, for cleansing the sacred vessels, 13 inches square with a narrow hem. Purificators may be plain or marked with a small cross in the center.

It is well to have two or three dozen, and they should be folded and ironed in threes, making nine squares. A fresh one of course should be used at each Eucharist.

(3). The towel for drying the priest's fingers at the Lavabo and the Ablutions. It is well to have a dozen or more, made of birdseye or any good toweling, not less than 27 by 12 inches. They may be pulled out at the ends in a fringe.

The corporals are carried to the credence table (or the altar) or side altar, (at whichever place the elements are prepared before the Eucharist begins) in a Burse or Corporal Case, a pair of covers hinged and folding together, from 8 to 10 inches square. The covers are stiffened with cardboard, the exterior being covered with silk, tapestry, colored linen or other material, the upper cover ornamented with embroidery or other decorations, and may have tassels at the four corners. It is usual to have burses of each of the liturgical colors to go with the various sets of hangings for the altar and the ministers' vestments. If this is not possible, one burse of any color or material will suffice, preferably of white linen. The inside of all burses should have white linen lining. Every burse should have a pair of corporals within, ready for use at any time.

The altar vessels require no description here.

When possible, whether simple or elaborate, they should be designed and executed by a real craftsman. A Credence Table or shelf is an indispensable adjunct to the altar on which to place the wine and water cruets of glass or metal, the metal box for altar breads, the lavabo bowl or basin, and the ewer of glass or metal for water to wash the priest's hands. It is a great convenience to have a Piscina in connection with a credence shelf in the south wall of the sanctuary, thus providing a drain into the earth for all water used at the altar in hand washing.

From before Reformation times and right down to the present, two candles have stood on all old English altars so fortunate as to have escaped the desecrations of the Puritans and Calvinists. The Ornaments Rubric covers two lights and two lights only, which should stand directly on the altar, not on a re-table or shelf.

During our era of liturgical confusion, beginning in the 19th Century, the idea was prevalent and still obtains in many places, that certain lights should be restricted to the Holy Communion, and thus the term "eucharistic lights" came into use, unknown formerly. The two altar candles should be lighted alike at Morning and Evening Prayer and for the Eucharist, on Sundays and other holy days and their eves, and during their octaves when

there are such, but lighted only for the Eucharist on ordinary days. In the 19th Century the modern Roman use of six candles on the high altar was copied in some of our churches, but it is rather mid-victorian to use them now, and of course branch candlesticks on the altar are quite out of place. Using the two altar lights at the Choir Offices there is no need for so called "Vesper lights," unknown to the Ornaments Rubric.

To add to the expression of joy on Sundays, Saints' Days, and great festivals, the Ornaments Rubric covers other lights round about the altar, but not on the altar. Thus two great standard lights may be placed on the pavement on either side before the altar, and lighted on all these occasions with the two altar lights both at the Eucharist and the Choir Offices. In addition to this it is a beautiful arrangement to have lights on the four riddel posts at the corners of the altar. These candles were anciently held in the hands of carved angel figures, or in sconces, at the top of the posts, and were reserved for lighting on the greatest days. Anciently extra lights were lighted also in sconces on the walls, and in a corona hanging from the roof above and before the altar, especially at Christmas.

That there should always be a cross on the altar is another 19th Century idea. In medieval times

the processional cross was sometimes removed from its staff and dropped into a base or stand on the altar. Certainly no altar needs a cross if there is a carved or painted representation of the crucifixion in the reredos, or indeed if an altar cross would hide any sculpture or painting in the reredos, it is better omitted.

The place for the crucifix is on the choir or rood-screen and it should not be repeated on the altar. If there is a crucifix on the rood-screen the cross on the altar should be without the figure of the Crucified.

The best subject for sculpture or painting in the center of the reredos is our Lord in glory, the center of the worship of heaven, with Whom we join in the Eucharist in offering His eternal sacrifice.

It is to be hoped that with the dawn of a better day, no longer will any church provide new ornaments in brass. Silver plate is much better looking if metal is used, and in good designs specially prepared. Another good procedure is to have a real artist draw patterns for altar cross and candlesticks to be made of wood, simple, or elaborate with much carving, and to decorate them with gold leaf or silver. Brass missal-stands and flower vases should also be discarded as far as possible. Cushions were generally used for the supporting of the missal in

the "times past" and the period referred to in the Ornaments Rubric. They are extremely convenient, and when made of beautiful material add a pleasing touch of color. One may be used and moved with the book, or two in which case only the missal is moved after the Epistle. Left at either end of the altar out of service time a pair of cushions is a great addition to the beauty of the altar. If a missal-stand must be used it is well to cover it with a strip of silk brocade or tapestry of any good color, with tassels if desired at the four corners. This will save the cover of the book from getting soiled and worn from rubbing on the metal, and hide offending brass. Flower vases are not covered by the Ornaments Rubric because in ancient times flowers were never placed on the altar, though they were used in decoration round about the altar as well as in other parts of the church. There can be no objection to placing them on the altar if they look well and are used in moderation, and not allowed to remain when they begin to wither. If there is a properly designed and decorated reredos, flowers are not needed on the altar and often spoil its effect. Two vases of flowers look well if behind them there is a dorsal of plain color, and the vases are of clear glass, or pottery, not brass.

A better way to use flowers for decoration is to have them in potted plants, or in large vases or

jars, set on the altar steps or the pavement, if they are not in the way, also in front of the rood-screen. The altar with its hangings, reredos and other ornaments should be rich, colorful and beautiful enough in itself not to need flowers to make it attractive. When they are used it is best as a rule to let them be the free offering of the people and not to buy them. The only traditional use of flowers is for festivals, and then not on the altar. A great deal of money is spent for flowers which might better be used towards really good frontals and other ornaments of permanent value.

We have noted that the typical English east-end is square. It also usually had a large east-window over the altar with space enough left for a low reredos, or for a dorsal, below the window sill. In the best examples this space has the same dimensions at the front of the altar, *i.e.*, it is about 3 feet high and of course extends the whole length of the altar. A very important principle is found here. The early English builders discovered that any higher reredos would dwarf the altar, which needs a background just above it in the same scale as the altar itself. Even when in some churches and most cathedrals, where there is no east window directly above the altar, as in Winchester cathedral, the part directly above the altar was definitely marked off as the reredos proper with dimensions the same

approximately as the altar itself, and its decoration in scale with the altar, the figures in sculpture or painting being much smaller than the carved statues in the great altar screen above and around it. Where there is a blank wall for the whole east-end, the space above and around the low reredos or dorsal may be filled with a high curtain hung from a cornice, or overhanging canopy, or a tester.

Where it is possible to afford a reredos, it is imperative for the best results, to insist on its dimensions being the same approximately as the front of the altar. It provides opportunity for varying forms of decorative treatment. It may contain scenes from Holy Scripture in carvings or paintings, niches for statues of our Lord and the Saints, panels for paintings, divided off by delicate mouldings and traceries. There is no part where the richest color is more needed than directly over the altar, either in wood or stone carving. Reredoses in gilt and polychrome are the most effective and do away with the coldness of uncolored stone and the sameness of uncolored wood. Treated thus, gorgeous in gold and color, it is an appropriate decorative background for the Holy Mysteries on the greatest feast days and during the joyful and glorious seasons of the Church Year, while during Advent and the Pre-Lent season it may be covered with a dark blue dorsal, and with a special dorsal during Lent

(described below). It may even be covered during Trinity-tide if desired with a handsome dorsal.

When a really good reredos is beyond the means of a parish or mission, a dorsal of silk or other material is a satisfying alternative. It should be the same height as a proper reredos *i.e.*, about three feet above the altar. If there is no east window directly above the dorsal, or if there be one or more very high in the east wall, the empty space above the dorsal may be filled by a suitable painting, or with some sort of plain but good colored hangings attached to a cornice at a suitable height and extending over the whole breadth of the east wall. High dorsals are not satisfactory, as they dwarf the altar, give an uncomfortable sense of blankness, and distract the eye from the holy table. Often a plain wall whitened makes an effective background for a rich dorsal or reredos and a properly vested altar. A certain amount of contrast between the dorsal and the altar frontal is good, both in texture and color of the materials used. If it is not desired to have a different dorsal to go with each frontal; a good arrangement is to have a festal, a ferial, and a Lenten dorsal. To this may be added a dark blue one for Advent and the pre-lenten season.

With the reredos or the dorsal, the old custom was to have curtains at the ends of the altar called riddels. These should project at right angles to the

east wall, and at the same height as the reredos or dorsal *i.e.*, about 6½ feet from the floor. They are hung on rods as is the dorsal, and these should be strong so as not to sag, and are best made of wrought iron. The rods may have sconces at their ends for candles. A beautiful arrangement of the olden days was to hang the riddels and the dorsal on rods between four pillars or posts at the four corners of the altar. At the top of these posts there were sconces for candles, or better as was often done, there were kneeling or standing figures of four Angels holding candles. Sometimes the posts were connected at the ends of the altar, and along the top of the dorsal if there was no reredos, with a light cornice as well as with the rods holding the curtains. Two riddel posts only may be used at the front corners of the altar, in which case the rear ends of the rods would be fastened to the reredos or the east wall. The riddel curtains need not be, but are well to be of the same material as the dorsal, and always if possible of the richest tapestry or brocade. Other material may be used however, provided it is of good color and texture.

During Lent they and the dorsal should be of unbleached linen if the old English custom is followed. The riddels hang anywhere from 3 to 8 or 10 inches away from the ends of the altar. If they are on rods only, without posts, they should never

be spread open, but always hang parallel to the ends of the altar. Their purpose is to enclose and enshrine the altar. With the dorsal, they are the later development of the ciborium curtains of the ancient basilicas of the early Christian centuries, when the altar was entirely screened on four sides during some parts of the Holy Mysteries.

In churches of classical design with an apsidal sanctuary, a canopy or ciborium over the altar on four pillars is the best treatment, and curtains may be used between the pillars on the sides and the back, but no gradines or re-table should be introduced. The high altar in the great basilica of St. Peter's, Rome, is happily free both from a tabernacle and gradines, having only the cross and candlesticks directly on the altar itself.

As to colors for holy days and seasons, whatever we do we cannot be incorrect, excepting in using bad shades. In old times it was customary to keep the most sumptuous hangings and vestments for festivals almost regardless of their color, and when they lost their freshness to use them for ordinary occasions. When definite color sequences became more or less fixed in England, each diocese had its own use, coinciding with each other in some respects and differing in others.

There is both beauty and instruction in marking the various days and seasons by some definite

change in color. The sequence with which we are most familiar today is clear and intelligible. It is often called "The Roman Sequence" because Rome now officially orders it, but all the colors it orders were in use in England long before any orders were given at Rome. It can, however, be reformed and enriched in certain respects—reformed by abandoning church-shop purple, a rather blatant shade which came into use in the 19th century, and substituting for it a good dark blue which is nearer to what was formerly known as purple, and by giving up that awful muddy shade of green which as Dr. Dearmer said was never made by God, and using a real green instead.

For enrichment of the color sequence we may follow the most universal custom in England of the second year of King Edward the Sixth, as well as before and since that year, of using a special color for Lent and for Passiontide, to break the long period from Septuagesima to Easter, when blue or violet is so monotonously used in most of our churches today. The widely-spread English use was white linen of an unbleached tint, decorated with red or blue or black symbols of the passion and other devices. It was called "The Lenten Array" and not only were the altar frontals and eucharistic vestments of this color, and the dorsals and the curtains, riddels, etc., but also pictures,

sculpture, images and crosses were all veiled with it beginning on Ash Wednesday. It is a quiet color, not unlike the color of ashes. Canon Hepher described it as the Church's khaki which she puts on for the season of spiritual training. It also gives a church a very subdued and restful feeling, and when all the hangings and veils are removed for Easter, the bright colors of all the ornaments of the Church shine out most resplendently.

Instead of veiling the candlesticks, which according to Roman use is done in Passiontide, special candlesticks of metal or wood, painted in black, or in black and red, or red, may be used during the whole of Lent, which is the English tradition. Those who saw "Murder in the Cathedral" may recall the beauty of the red candlesticks on the altar.

For the last two weeks of Lent, Passiontide, beginning with Passion Sunday, the color for altar frontals and eucharistic vestments was changed to dark red ornamented with black, red as symbolic of the Precious Blood, and black for the sin for which it was shed. The white unbleached linen dorsal, curtains, etc., remaining unchanged until Easter. These enrichments are becoming common in England and fine examples of the Lenten Array may be seen in London at Westminster Abbey and Southwark cathedral, as well as in many parish churches, there and elsewhere. If feasts of Con-

fessors are kept, saffron or yellow may be added to the sequence.

The color of the interior walls of churches is an important matter. We have gradually worked away from the dark and gloomy greens, reds and browns by substituting lighter shades, but we still seem to be afraid of white walls which were common of old, even when interior walls were of stone. White or slightly distempered white walls are satisfactory both for cheerful interiors and as a setting for the various colors used in hangings, and other ornaments.

HELPFUL BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, ETC., FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Parsons Handbook. Percy Dearmer. Mowbray. (Out of print.)

Alcuin Club Publications. Tracts. Mowbray.

I. *Ornaments of the Rubric*. 5s.

XIV. *Ceremonial Pictured in Photographs*. 5s.

The English Churchman's Kalendar. Mowbray. (Published annually in December with many notes and illustrations.)

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